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SPECIAL
EDITION
RESOURCE

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THIS

Community Resource Guide

Understanding young people
and substance abuse.

LEARN MORE. START TALKING.

THE
Stand
PROJECT

The first step
is to become
informed.

We hope this
resource is a
helpful start.

We are all in this together.



ALCOHOL

Alcohol is the most widely used drug among teenagers (and Americans in general).

- Alcohol is a drug - just like marijuana or cocaine.
- Drinking is the third-leading cause of preventable death in the U.S. - AFTER heart disease and cancer.
- Children of alcoholics have a 4 to 10 times greater risk of becoming alcoholics than children of non-alcoholics.
- About 1/3 of high school students binge drink (i.e., five or more drinks of alcohol within a few hours).
- Almost half of teens say they got their alcohol from family or at home.

A clear, consistent “no-use” message is the best message.

~~We used to
drink in high
school.~~

~~A little
alcohol is not
that bad.~~

~~I'd rather they
drink here, so I
know they are
safe.~~

How alcohol harms a child

Even though it's illegal for adolescents to drink, some adults consider underage drinking “innocent” - something “every kid tries.” Young bodies that are still developing, however, are much more sensitive to the effects of alcohol, which can cause both physical and emotional harm.

- Alcoholism can develop in teens in a matter of months.
- Adolescence is a period of rapid growth. The brain, nervous system, reproductive system and liver are still maturing in young people, and are therefore, much more sensitive to chemicals and drugs. The younger a child starts using alcohol, the greater the chance he or she will become an alcoholic.
- Like physical changes, a young person's sense of identity and basic social skills are still emerging. Alcohol disrupts this development by producing a chemical “high” that affects learning how to deal with others, carry-out responsibilities and handle problems. Those who drink heavily at a young age essentially stop growing up - mentally, emotionally and socially.
- There is no “safe” dose of alcohol for young people. Any alcohol in the body of a young person puts this child at higher risk for alcohol-related problems.
- Alcohol is linked to a higher death rate among teens. Deaths from car accidents, suicides, and homicides are higher among individuals age 15 to 24 with most of these being drug- or alcohol-related.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN OUR COMMUNITY.

Whether you are a parent, grandparent, coach, or friend, as an adult you can be a positive example to help young people in our community grow up free from the burdens and ill effects of substance abuse.

Unfortunately, there are no guarantees that young people will not choose to try drugs. But, as a community, we can lessen the risk by staying tuned into their feelings, attitudes and behaviors and equipping them to make healthy decisions.



MARIJUANA

Marijuana often leads to experimentation with stronger, more lethal substances.

- Marijuana today is 10 to 20 times more potent than 50 years ago.
- It can take about three to six weeks for the body to rid itself of THC – the addictive chemical found in marijuana.
- Long-term use of marijuana adversely affects the lungs, heart, brain, reproductive system, and the body's immune response to infections and disease.
- Studies have shown that long-term use of marijuana may be linked with lower IQ (as much as an 8 point drop) later in life.
- Rarely do young people use other illegal drugs without first using marijuana.
- Marijuana is the second leading substance for which people receive drug treatment in the United States.



TOBACCO

Tobacco is one of the most addictive drugs.

- Smoking, chewing and dipping all involve nicotine.
- Nearly all adult smokers began smoking by the age of 18 – almost no one starts smoking after 21. Of those who begin smoking as youth, 80% will smoke into adulthood, and one-half of adult smokers will die prematurely from tobacco-related diseases.
- Long-term use of tobacco can result in high blood pressure, heart attack, chronic bronchitis, pneumonia, emphysema, and/or cancer of the lungs, throat and mouth.
- The younger individuals are when they start smoking, the more likely he/she will become long-term users. Nearly 9 out of 10 adult smokers report having started by the age of 18.

PRESCRIPTION & OVER-THE-COUNTER DRUGS



21% of high school students reported using prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription.



About **80%** of teens who misuse prescription drugs get them from friends or relatives.



50%
used narcotic pain relievers



19%
were not sure what they used



8%
used multiple drugs



Unintentional drug overdose is the leading cause of injury-related death in Ohio. **Opioids are responsible for 66% of drug overdoses.**



SAFELY DISPOSE of prescription and over-the-counter medications at the **Drug Collection Unit**

Located at The Municipal Services Center,
3600 Tremont Rd | 8am-5pm, Monday - Friday

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Your child's attitudes and behaviors toward alcohol and drugs are being developed and shaped right now. There are many things you can do to help prevent your child from using these substances. The time to begin is now.

Talk with your child about alcohol and other drugs.

Become knowledgeable about alcohol and drugs; then talk with your child about how these substances can harm him or her. Talk together frequently and clarify or correct any assumptions, myths or misconceptions, such as "everybody drinks" or "marijuana won't hurt you." Communicate a clear message about family rules and consequences for use of alcohol and other drugs, including drugs your child may be taking under a doctor's prescription.

Learn to really listen to your child.

Encourage your child to share his or her questions and concerns about alcohol and other drugs. Don't do all the talking or lecture. Listen for what is happening in his or her world. Ask daily check-in questions, then when the opportunity presents itself, ask big picture questions.

- Who are your best friends? (do you know their parents' names?)
- Did you finish your homework? Do you need any help?
- Who is your favorite teacher?
- * Tell me about your coach. Or the players.
- When was the last time you were excited about something? Describe that.
- What is the new video game you are playing? Are you playing live? With who?
- What group are we listening to? How did you hear about them?
- How was the movie? What was it about? Who was in it?

Help your child develop self-confidence.

Look for the positives in your child and then share them. When correcting your child, criticize the action – not the child. Praise effort and accomplishments.

Help your child develop strong values.

Communicate your family values and then model these values yourself. Teach your child how to make decisions based on the standards of right and wrong. Explain that these are the standards for your family, despite what other families may be doing.

Help your child deal with peer pressure.

Discuss the importance of individuality and the meaning of real friendships. Children who have been taught to be gentle and loving may need parental "permission" to assertively say "no" to negative peer pressure. Provide your child with some possible strategies for saying "no." The two of you can even practice these, so that when the time comes, your child is prepared.

Create family rules that help your child say "no."


Discuss your expectations with your child in advance so that he or she will feel empowered to say "no" to alcohol and other drugs. Spell out the consequences for breaking these rules (for example, "My parents will take away my keys if I get caught drinking"). Be prepared to follow through.

Keep your family and home safe.

Inventory all medication in your home. Note the number of pills and refills remaining. Secure your medications by locking them up. Discard expired or unused medications properly. A disposal unit is available in our community at the Upper Arlington Municipal Building just inside the Tremont Road entrance). Talk with your kids about the addictive nature of prescription medications and the dangers of sharing a medication, taking another person's medication, or utilizing your own medication in a way other than prescribed.


Encourage healthy, creative activities.

Look for ways to help your child get involved in hobbies, school clubs, and other activities that reduce boredom, provide an outlet from stress, and limit too much free time. Always encourage positive relationships and interests.

 **Team up with other parents.**


Work with other parents to build a drug-free environment for your children. When parents join together and take a united stand against drug use, they become more effective than when they act alone.

Form a peer group with the parents of your children's friends. The most effective way to stop a child from using drugs is to stop his/her friends from using them too.


 **Be a good example.**

Examine your own habits and attitudes toward alcohol and other drugs by asking yourself these questions:

- Do you smoke cigarettes?
- Do you attend parties or events that involve a lot of drinking?
- Is drinking often the focus of conversation in your home?
- Are you proud of how much you can drink? Do you joke about it?
- Have your children ever seen you drunk?
- Do you drink and drive? Or ride with drivers who have been drinking?
- Do you always rely on medication to handle minor pains?
- Do you often take a prescription or non-prescription sleeping aid to fall asleep?
- When you are feeling sad or nervous, do you usually take something to get rid of the feeling?
- Have your children seen you smoke marijuana or use prescription drugs recreationally?

 **Know what to do if you suspect a problem.**

Realize that no child is immune to the lure of drugs. Learn the telltale signs of alcohol and drug use. Take seriously any concerns you hear from friends, teachers or other kids about your child's possible drug use.

 **Trust your instincts.**

If you feel in your gut that something is not right with your child, dig deeper. If there's a problem, seek professional help.



Young people need and want clear guidelines! It's important for parents, schools and our community to support a clear, consistent "no-use" message for young people.

HOW TO TELL IF YOUR CHILD IS USING DRUGS OR ALCOHOL

It can be difficult to distinguish typical adolescent behavior from drug-induced behavior. Here are some things to look for in a child:

Changes in physical appearance

- Lack of personal cleanliness, messy appearance
- Red eyes and frequent use of eye drops
- Runny nose, congestion, coughing
- Wearing dark glasses when not necessary
- Pale face or circles under eyes

Changes in eating and sleeping habits

- Difficulty falling asleep or insomnia
- Inappropriate napping
- Significant weight loss or gain
- Poor appetite
- Sudden appetite (especially for sweets)
- Overnights in other unsupervised homes

Changes in school or job performance

- Failing grades and neglected homework
- Frequent tardiness and/or absenteeism
- Falling asleep in class
- Discipline problems
- Quitting a job or getting fired

Positive attitude toward drugs and alcohol

- Pro-drug messages on posters or clothing
- Strong defense of the occasional use of drugs by peers, thinks adults “hassle” kids
- Easily angered when confronted about chemical use
- Others are concerned about his or her use of alcohol or other drugs

Changes in behavior and personality

- Abrupt changes in mood
- Hostility or defiance of rules
- Depression or “I don’t care” attitude
- Lack of responsibility - not doing chores or homework, forgetting family occasions
- Blaming, lying or making excuses
- Loss of memory, shortened attention span, disordered thought patterns
- Withdrawal from family, isolation

Changes in friends and interests

- New or different friends, especially those who use drugs
- Friends who are rarely introduced or seldom come to your house
- More time spent in room or away from home
- Secrecy about actions and possessions
- Hobbies, sports or extracurricular activities are given up, everything is “boring”
- Out past curfew or sneaking out at night

Physical evidence

- Fake ID
- Missing or watered-down liquor
- Missing prescription medicine
- Use of mouthwash or breath sprays
- Use of Visine or other eye drops
- Burning incense, room or car deodorizers
- “Stash” cans often disguised as cola cans
- Roach clips, rolling papers
- Bongos, pipes and/or small screens
- Baggies containing dried leaves or seeds



If you are concerned that your child may be using alcohol or other drugs, you must share your concerns with your child.

Here are a few tips

- Don't discuss your concerns with your child while he or she is high.
- Select a time when interruptions will be minimal.
- Be very specific about the behavior you've observed.
- In a straightforward way, tell your child about your concern and the reasons for it.
- Explain why drug use is forbidden in your home and the consequences if you catch your child using.
- Be clear and be specific.

Language dos and don'ts

DO be understanding

"I realize some kids use drugs."

DON'T be sarcastic

"Don't think you're fooling me!"

DO be firm

"As your parent, I can't allow you to engage in harmful activities."

DON'T be accusatory

"You're a liar!" or "You're lying."

DO be supportive

"I love you and sense something is troubling you, and I want to help."

DON'T be self-pitying

"How could you do this to me?"

Don't be misled if your child says

It's not mine, I'm holding it for a friend.

I've quit, that's old.

I've only tried it once.

Everyone is doing it.

It's *only* a little beer.

!

SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP IMMEDIATELY IF YOUR CHILD:

STEALS | RUNS AWAY FROM HOME | SHOWS VIOLENT BEHAVIOR | THREATENS OR ATTEMPTS SUICIDE

Remember, if your child is using drugs, he/she needs your help. Don't be afraid to be a strong parent!

The Stand Project is an Upper Arlington community action project focused on the prevention of substance abuse and committed to standing by students and families in finding help.

We are committed to:

- Fostering a culture where the prevention of substance abuse is a priority.
- Supporting those who choose to stand for a healthy lifestyle free of drugs and alcohol.
- Helping kids, families and caregivers concerned about or touched by substance abuse.
- Providing the UA community with resources, education, information and inspiration.

LEARN MORE. START TALKING.

TheStandProjectUA.org



*The resource Guide was produced in collaboration with
The City of Upper Arlington, The Upper Arlington City Schools,
The Upper Arlington Public Library and Syntero.*

**TO GIVE to The Stand Project visit
TheStandProjectUA.org**